

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) An electrical grounding assembly for a control valve comprising:

- a valve body;
- a valve trim electrically isolated from the valve body; and
- an elastic grounding connector having in combination an elastic region and an electrically conductive surface compressed between the valve body and the valve trim to form and maintain an internal electrical contact between the valve body and valve trim

wherein the elastic grounding connector is comprised of deformable stranded metal generally formed as a ball.

2. (Original) The electrical grounding assembly of claim 1, wherein the valve body has a bore adjacent to the valve trim for receiving the elastic grounding connector.

3-5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently amended) The elastic grounding connector assembly of claim 41, wherein the elastic grounding connector includes a bias spring such that the bias spring places the deformable stranded metal ball in continuous contact with the valve trim and the valve body.

7. (Currently amended) A method to substantially reduce the electric potential across a control valve assembly wherein the control valve assembly comprises at least a valve body and a valve trim, the valve trim being electrically isolated from the valve body, the method comprising:

providing an elastic conductive grounding connector, the elastic conductive grounding connector being comprised of a deformable stranded metal ball;

forming the valve trim from at least a valve shaft and a control element, the valve shaft having an outboard end;

forming the valve body with a bore sized to receive the elastic conductive grounding connector and the outboard end of valve shaft;

filling the bore with the elastic grounding connector; and

placing the valve trim within the valve body with the outboard end of the valve shaft in the valve body bore so that the outboard end of the valve shaft compresses the elastic conductive grounding connector thereby forming a shared electrical connection between the valve body and the valve trim.

8-10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) The elastic grounding connector assembly of claim 97, wherein the elastic grounding connector includes a bias spring such that the bias spring places the deformable stranded metal ball in continuous contact with the valve trim and the valve body.